



Avengers Assemble: Science Bros

Kelly Sue DeConnick , Pete Woods (Illustrator) , Stefano Caselli (Illustrator)

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Two scientists, two giant egos. One wears a tank...one is a tank. Tony Stark and Bruce Banner are science bros! And when a fellow big-brain goes missing, the two heroes take bets who can find him first! It's Amazing Race, Avengers-style, as Iron Man and Hulk embark on a global manhunt with the ultimate prize at stake...bragging rights! But what happens when a 20 million-year-old evolutionary catalyst infects the Hulk? The Avengers must find the missing scientist before he and his Order of the Dragon unleash his bacteria on the entire world! Plus: the Black Widow's sins have resurfaced! Widow, Spider-Woman and Hawkeye travel to Siberia to search for a missing girl with ties to an old Soviet assassination. But the truth behind this girl's disappearance may be more than the Avengers are prepared to handle!

COLLECTING: Avengers Assemble 9-13, Annual 1

Avengers Assemble: Science Bros Details

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From Reader Review *Avengers Assemble: Science Bros* for online ebook

Scott S. says

AA, part two . . . bring the popcorn again.

While I didn't enjoy quite as much as the initial volume, it was an *almost*.

The first story is a strong, standard full roster adventure and everyone gets their moment - or snappy line of dialogue - or two to shine. A lot of banter (especially between title 'bros' Tony and Bruce), a lot of action, and a lot of fun.

The second features the awkward but effective 'trio for trouble' of Black Widow (some brief but nice delving into her character), Hawkeye, and Spider-Woman on a personal jaunt back to *mother Russia*. Given BW's pre-Avengers background as an assassin, this was a little more serious in tone.

The last was sort of mediocre but was a good showcase for the Vision character.

Nikki says

Although it feels a little disconnected -- the TPB is a collection of disparate Avengers stories, rather than any kind of continuous story arc -- this is a great book. It's funny till it's not, serious in the right places, with some great character moments and a great team. Spider-woman and Hulk make a fun pair-up, while I will never get over Captains America and Marvel being friends and drinking kale smoothies for breakfast, or Tony's sweet pep talk for Bruce while he's eating caramel and walnut ice cream. The final story involves the Vision, and it surprised me by linking with Young Avengers and having Vision go to meet one of his sons at the end. Also, I thrilled a little to the scene-setting line: "Outside Wiccan and Hulkling's House". I hope Vision likes his son's boyfriend...

I was a little bemused by Clint apparently dating Jessica Drew, but okay. The story with those two and Natasha was pretty cool, though strongly reminiscent of Amazing Spider-man, with the lizard people and all...

The art is really good, too; I don't actually remember any of the artists' names from anything else, but the drawings are really clean and clear, the action looks great, the colours are bright and eye-catching without being garish, etc.

This volume is worth it for "Hulllllk, make me a sandwich", "hippy peanut butter" and the naked walk to the Baxter Building alone. The rest is extra caramel for Bruce's depressed ice cream breakfast.

Mike says

DeConnick creates very believable characters, who are both unique in the way they speak and are genuinely

three-dimensional in showing their less-than-admirable side. They just have real personality.

The villain in the first arc is even a rounded character, and unite unpredictable. He takes on an air of surprise and curiosity at the proceedings that I have just come to never expect, and yet the malice is still lurking in plain sight.

The best part of this is the sense of humour throughout. Not Bendis-lite quippy, more like a sense of wry sarcasm that keeps everyone from getting too comfy with each other - which just goes to underscore how familiar and comfortable the team is with each other, and yet how painful the dysfunction of everyone is when you amplify it by bringing it all together.

The second arc, with Black Widow at the center, is both a celebration of good friends backing up someone when they're facing big tasks - and a middling story of loss, revenge and monsters. I enjoyed the character moments far more than the actual plot or opponents, which were pretty bland even with their extraordinaryness. Pretty ordinary for Marvel U, not exactly anything we haven't seen tons of times before.

Looking forward to the next arc despite this slowdown in DeConnick's momentum - she does characters amazingly well, which is a huge part of my enjoyment of comics these days.

Jeff says

[(hide spoiler)]

James DeSantis says

All my friends on here seemed to love this, I thought it was just decent fun but nothing special.

Tony and Banner make a bet. They split in to two teams, which really is just Hulk and Spider-woman and Tony with Thor. This is basically a fun little trip that turns a lot darker when they discover a hidden secret. The next story is a two part story about Hawkeye and Black Widow. When Black Widow is drawn back into a mission for someone who she'd given a favor chip to long ago, both Clint and Jessica decide to follow her there.

Good: I enjoyed the banter here. Very movie-like MCU universe feel. I also liked most of the fights, they were big and bombastic. Overall easy to read, good plotting and pacing.

Bad: The art is okay but feels kind of stockish. I also thought the stakes were super low. I get this is more a "FUN" title but it felt so low I was kinda of bored when they threw any real "oh no" moments at us.

Overall this is a fun title. If like the MCU you'll probably love this. I do love the MCU but this just didn't blow me away. Still a fun title to check out if bored. A 3 out of 5.

Sam Quixote says

I'll just say it: I'm not a fan of Kelly Sue DeConnick's writing. I tried her Captain Marvel and didn't like it; Pretty Deadly was full of unrealised potential that divulged into a turgid mess; and one issue of Ghost was enough. So I was REALLY surprised when I picked up her Avengers book and found myself laughing at the banter and enjoying the book. She surprised me in the best possible way and made me want to give her Captain Marvel another shot.

Here's what I've noticed about modern superhero comics - they split into two camps. You either get a good character story or you get a well-plotted story. The great books are the ones that have both but the good ones usually do one or the other, while the weaker ones do crap versions of those types while the awful ones achieve neither.

So for example, good character books are Gillen/McKelvie's Young Avengers or Fraction/Aja's Hawkeye where you don't mind what the story is because you love the characters. Good story books are like Soule/Pulido's She Hulk or Ellis/Shalvey's Moon Knight where the plot captivates you more than the characters. The truly great ones are books like Slott/Various Artists' Superior Spider-Man which has a great central character you want to read more of AND a fantastic absorbing plot.

ANYWAY: Avengers Assemble is a good character book - the plot's not important, it's just something for the characters to be doing while they're riffing. The first arc concerns a Chinese villain called Yun Guang Han who wants to create an unstoppable army of super soldiers or something. The second sees an outbreak of lizard people amidst the youth of Siberia. Meh.

But the character stuff is wonderful. Like Banner and Stark arguing over who's got the better scientific morals/approach, leading to a bizarre bet where the stakes are walking through Manhattan in your birthday suit. And Jessica Drew aka Spider-Woman's face when she uses her pheromones to get Hulk to make her a sandwich: "Huuuuuuuulk, make me a saaaandwiiich!" (as if she eats carbs!). Then her face when she sees what a Hulk sandwich looks like! By the way, this is all just five pages though it's representative of DeConnick's work on this book as a whole.

There's even a bit where Jessica and Hulk are in the Arctic and she says she's cold so Hulk puts his hand over her face which warms her up. Same thing happened on the set of The Princess Bride when Robin Wright told Andre the Giant she was cold so he put his massive hand over her head!

One other detail I liked which was unexpected was the appearance of the classic Cap outfit. Nowadays his outfit looks like the one Chris Evans wears in The Winter Soldier movie - very modern, practical, etc. But I miss the old Cap with the blue chainmail scales, the wings sticking out on the sides of his mask and the corsair boots. Well, he's got them in this book - woohoo! And he has an awesome aerial battle too.

I won't mention every little thing I liked about this book but DeConnick's character voices are highly entertaining to read - she does ensemble stories better than individual characters like Captain Marvel.

The one writer who does live up to the lowest expectations is Christos Gage whose Vision story that closes out the book was totally pants. It's the same cliched "scientist has crap life and goes batty with superpowers" thing that's been done to death for decades. I suppose the last couple panels are cool but everything that preceded it was 100% Gage-certified crapness.

If you're like me and don't think much of Kelly Sue DeConnick's Captain Marvel or Pretty Deadly and you're willing to give her another chance, check out Science Bros - it's an eye opener! Definitely one of the funniest Marvel books I've read this year, DeConnick proves she can write the hell out of an Avengers book. Get rid of Jonathan Hickman and put her in charge of the title, Marvel!!

Jesse A says

This is a fun series. I enjoy these kind of one off stories. Good stuff.

Sesana says

It's books like this that make me glad I'm reading Marvel again. It isn't quite perfection, but it's so incredibly fun. *Avengers Assemble* seems like it's positioned as the book for people fresh off the *Avengers* movie who have little experience in comics, and it's great for that. It has most of the ingredients that made *Avengers* such a great movie, especially a good balance of serious action and humor. The Science Bros story does start off hilariously (a million bonus points to DeConnick for writing Hulk griping about "hippy peanut butter") but shifts to serious where appropriate. And it doesn't feel any more jarring to the reader than it does to the characters. This is supposed to be fun for them, until it isn't. The villain feels like a credible threat, and has enough character himself that I hope to see him back again soon. The Black Widow story has a more serious tone, and it gives a good look inside Natasha's head. The last issue, an annual, is an oddly touching Vision story. I've read very little classic *Avengers*, and I barely even know who the character of Vision is, but by the end of the issue I found myself deeply attached to the character. That one apparently wasn't DeConnick, but it was a lovely piece of work.

Between this and *Captain Marvel*, I'm becoming a huge fan of DeConnick. I especially love the tiny, background details in the book, things that you can miss on a quick read but add depth to the story world once you notice them. Things like Captain American signing paperwork in the background of a panel. I don't know if the credit for this sort of thing goes to DeConnick or the artist, or more likely both, but I loved seeing it. And details aside, Caselli draws a really nice looking superhero comic.

The continuity requirement for reading *Avengers Assemble* has, so far, been practically non-existent. It's a great jumping on point for new fans interested by the movie, and it does a fantastic job of introducing characters who weren't around for the movie.

Kemper says

I'm really tempted to give this five stars. Not because it's one of the groundbreaking classics of the comic genre like *Watchmen* or *Dark Knight Returns*. It's not. It's also not putting a new twist on a familiar hero in brilliant ways like the current run of *Hawkeye*, and it's certainly not doing anything wildly original like *Saga*.

What is it then? Just a helluva lot of fun.

There's three stories in this collection. The first and best involves Tony Stark and Bruce Banner trying to settle a debate over science by pulling some of the other Avengers into a race to Antarctica to check out a

potential problem, but of course things go sideways once they get there. The next one has Black Widow trying to repay an old debt from her days as a KGB spy and assassin with a little help from Hawkeye and Spiderwoman. Finally, Vision tries to cope with his return from the dead as the Avengers confront a super villain.

So there's no huge crossover events that force you to read 20 other books to get the whole story. Nor are there major character deaths to pimp for sales. No epic storylines that will "Change the Marvel universe forever!" (Or at least until they return to baseline a few issues later.) It's also not so bogged down with history and continuity that only long time fans can understand it.

It's just the Avengers being Avengers with funny interactions, nice character bits, evil villains with dastardly schemes, plenty of action, and lots of Big Damn Hero moments.

The only bad thing is that it got my hopes that this title might keep delivering stories like that, but when I looked up what comes next I see that it's nothing but crossovers like *Age of Ultron* and *Infinity* after this.

sigh So much for that fifth star...

Nicole says

Second reading comments 2018:

Wow, I must've read a lot of things I thought were better than this since I first read this! And there have been more Marvel movies, including two featuring Paul Bettany's interesting portrayal of (the)Vision. It still has its moments, but I wasn't as fond of it overall this time and am downgrading it to 3 stars. The girl-power aspect is still good, and there's still some quippy-ness.

First reading review 2015:

Rounding up to a 4-star rating for the whole book, despite not liking *Annual #1* that much.

Science Bros (#9-11) - Kelly Sue DeConnick (writer); Stefano Caselli, et.al.(artists)

I'm not very familiar with the pre-existing, book-form versions of the Avengers, so I had no nitpicks about who was chosen to be on the team for the movie. I adore the movie. But I have no problem accepting a different configuration of the team in this story. It's good to see the female team members Captain Marvel and Spider-Woman. They hold their own very well up against Iron Man, the Hulk, Captain America and Thor. The story is entertaining, largely because of the dialogue--which is of Joss Whedon/Justin Theroux/Shane Black/Christopher Markus/James Gunn/Nicole Perlman quality. Zippy, funny, sarcastic, contemporary and realistic-sounding. This is how people talk. Even the villain has quirky lines instead of being a humourless blockhead like a lot of comic book villains. There's a good mix of the light and the serious, and all the necessary information gets conveyed without things getting bogged down anywhere. The contrast between Tony Stark's and Bruce Banner's worldviews is interesting, while they're also shown as capable of being friends.

The art is also very nice for the most part, with plenty of realistic detail. The beefcake shots of Tony Stark and the Hulk during their losers' walk of shame are over-the-top...but at least they serve to balance the fact that Spider-Woman sometimes looks as if she's wearing body paint instead of clothes. And I guess it's because I didn't grow up reading comics and thinking people running around in brightly-coloured leotards and Spandex were the coolest thing ever, because it really stood out to me how Tony Stark and Bruce Banner (I've watched the Avengers movie so many times, I can "hear" Mark Ruffalo inside my head saying the line about how he doesn't get a suit) are the only members of the Avengers not shown wearing their superhero

costumes *all the time*. Strange when they're just hanging around Avengers Tower. Spider-Man and Wolverine make appearances, too, but only in their Spidey and Wolverine suits, not Peter Parker or Logan street clothes when they're not directly involved in the action. Oh, well.

Issues/chapters #12-13, while included as part of the *Science Bros.* package, are not actually part of that story. Instead, they feature Black Widow and her continuing attempts to "wipe out the red in her ledger." Again, good dialogue--especially the back-and-forth between Spider-Woman and Hawkeye--and good art. The story, a Russian twist on the lizard-people serum Spider-Man readers are familiar with, is elevated by what Black Widow's going through.

Pleased with DeConnick's storytelling skills, I am definitely going to get my hands on the next volume of *Avengers Assemble*.

Annual #1 – Christos Gage (writer); Tomm Coker, et. al. (artists)

This one centres on The Vision, a character I'm not familiar with beyond his basic description and sort of the Marvel universe's version of Pinocchio (a synthetic, humanoid lifeform created by Ultron, who himself is a product of Tony Stark's Iron Man project), and his struggle to achieve an identity of his own. Here we have a silver version of Iron Man, Hank Pym as Giant-Man (instead of Ant-Man), Quicksilver and Captain Marvel as secondaries to the Vision. They're up against someone known as Sunturion (never heard of 'im), a once-ordinary guy turned into a vengeful superhuman with strange energy properties. The vengeful guy does damage and has to be talked down, and there's some existential mulling; but the story and the art really didn't do much for me. It was okay but not something I want more of.

Chelsea says

4 stars.

The first story, the Science Bros story, was a 5 star story. The second story with Widow, Spider-Woman and Hawkeye was a 4 star story and the Vision story was a 3 star story.

I read *Avengers Assemble: The Forgeries of Jealousy* first so I was really tempted to check this out. These books are a lot of fun! Plus, they're clearly made with the intent of being easy for new comic book readers to get into. There's nothing in this, short of the line up and some references, that would confuse someone who'd only seen the MCU films.

That being said, I enjoyed *The Forgeries of Jealousy* a lot more.

I adored the story with Tony and Bruce! Science bros for the win! Tony and Bruce clearly care about each other and the whole thing starts out of some friendly competition. They want to prove who's the better scientist so they take advantage of a mission to do it. I love the way Hulk's expressions are drawn in this book. There were times I actually felt like hugging him! The way that story ends with Tony and Hulk walking naked through town was hilarious! 5 star story.

Widow's story was interesting. I love a good Black Widow story and I liked the concept of the Widomakers (I think that's what they're called). Widow has "red in her ledger" and she wants to wipe it out by atoning for some of the awful things she was told to do. I'm a sucker for a good redemption story. The lizard people aspect didn't do it for me but there was some great character work here. I didn't like that Jess

came along as the jealous girlfriend. I could've totally done without that. 4 stars for a meh "bad guy" and the waste of Jess' potential.

Vision has never been a character I've been invested in. Like... at all. Full disclosure. But, that being said, he was okay in this story. It was basically a one-shot dealing with how he feels being back to life after Wanda got mad at the Avengers and killed a bunch of them. I really felt for him in Avengers V. X-Men when he was angry with her because she used him to hurt their friends. So, I felt sorry for him here when he's struggling to be a part of the group again. I had wondered if he'd ever met his sons and this kind of answers that for me. That being said, I felt nothing for the villain here. His story was meant to parallel Vision's but I *cared* about Vision's plight. The villain was meh and I didn't really care for the art. 3 stars.

A note about the art: why of why do we have to outline every nook and cranny of Jess' body? I think she's gorgeous as well but there is absolutely no way a woman would a costume that incredibly form-fitting. It looked like body paint. No... just no.

Ashley says

Kelly Sue DeConnick takes over the run of this series from Brian Michael Bendis, and it is already so much better.

There are actually three stories in this volume, the first is the title, wherein Bruce Banner and Tony Stark make a bet over who can find and rescue a fellow scientist first. It's by turns silly and funny and tragic and scary. It feels like the Avengers. I also like the art in this one much better than in volume one. The other Avengers, notably Captains America and Marvel and Spider-Woman also play a pretty big role. The focus isn't so much on the bad guy as it is the banter along the way. And it's some pretty great banter.

The second story is a Black Widow feature, also with Hawkeye and Spider-Woman (who is apparently dating Hawkeye). They travel to Russia after one of Black Widow's marks is called in. After she left her old life, she handed out nine marks to be called in for favors as a way to erase the red from her ledger, and this is the first to be called in. She has to save the daughter of a scientist she killed in order to prevent him from creating a dangerous weapon. But the daughter has secretly picked up where her father left off, and things get weird real fast.

The last story isn't actually by DeConnick, but by Christos Gage, and focuses on Vision (who we're going to meet in Age of Ultron in a couple of weeks), who wants to save a man whose life has been ruined by the company he gave his life to.

All in all, this is more like what I thought reading Avengers comics would be like. Just really fun and doesn't take itself too seriously.

Crystal Starr Light says

Bullet Review:

For as disappointing and bleh as Vol 1 was, this one was amazing. DeConnick is my new graphic novel

writer crush. The way she handles the characters is just - wow!! And of course, including Carol Danvers, my favorite superheroine, also gets brownie points. Actually, the fact that DeConnick's run included more women than Vol 1 was very encouraging and has even made me more interested in Spiderwoman/Jessica.

Good art. Great characters. Fantastic, witty, sarcastic dialogue. Interesting plots.

One of the few cases where I am SUPER glad I pursued the series instead of bailing after the first book/volume.

Anne says

This? *This* is why I keep reading comics.

Everyone and their mother has recommended DeConnick's run on this title to me, but (and I honestly have no idea why!) I never got around to it. Anyway, I guess that makes me somewhat late to the **Science Bros** love-fest.

Don't make the same mistake Anne did, random stranger!

In almost every single review I read here on Goodreads, I saw the word **fun**, and there's good reason for it. Everything about this volume is just...well, *FUN!*

There isn't anything in this that changes the Marvel universe, but I walked away with a smile on my face. And, really, isn't that why we all picked this habit up to start with?

*Or at least why **most** of us did...*

The first part had to do with a bet made between Tony & Bruce about which of them can find a missing colleague first.

Nothing groundbreaking, but the dialogue between the characters is witty and sharp. Can I use the word *zany* without embarrassing myself? Probably not.

Whatever. You get the point...it was fun to read!

The second part had Black Widow going off to try and make up for past sins, while Hawkeye & Spider-woman tag along to give an (unwanted) hand.

The quirky triangle between those three was unexpectedly the high point of the story for me.

Oh, oh! And the crazy Lizard People. Because you can never have too many stories about rogue human/lizard hybrids!

So, yes. Listen to your friends and pick up Science Bros. It's worth it!

C.G. Drews says

THIS WAS THE BEST IN THE WORLD. I've been reading quite a few comics lately and I really wanted something to live up to the hilarious awesomeness that is the movies. So far? They'd been pretty bleh. **THIS ONE WAS EVERYTHING AND MORE.** Seriously, if you don't know what comic to read, just pick up this one.

There's a few separate stories and they all go together except for the last one about The Vision which was boring and bleh. It was like 2-stars, honestly. **THE REST ARE 5-STARS.** The first one is a bet between Banner and Stark to find a science guy who's missing. The loser has to walk the street naked. It's fantastic, with so many awesome characters! Captain Marvel and Captain America are in there at the beginning making a kale milkshake together. **SO CUUUUTE.** And it features Spider Woman and Thor. Thor teams up with Stark and Spider Woman goes with Hulk on this quest. It ends in gun fire and awesome and they get their butts rescued by Marvel and America.

Oh, and Marvel and America decide both Banner and Stark have lost. The ending is quite hilarious.

There's also a whole episode on Black Widow. WHO IS LIKE MY FAVOURITE AVENGER EVER. She was wiping out some red in her ledger. *nods* It has Hawkeye and Spider Woman in it, but someone was coupled and I couldn't figure out who. I feel like it could've actually been that Hawkeye/Spiderwoman were together. *gasps*

But Black Widow rocked it. Loved that comic so much. Also weird scary monstery llizards.

Basically the most hilarious epic comic ever. I couldn't love it more. (Except for the lame last comic with Vision. Pfft. Whatever.)
